

Building a sustainable tomorrow through fiscal transparency

By: Saied Tafida

Challenged by the need to change the poor living conditions surrounding him while he was growing up in the North Eastern Nigeria, [Saied Sulaman Tafida](#) made the decision to walk the path of improving transparency. He started volunteering, with NGOS when he was 18. He observed that most of the Sub-Saharan countries are rated very low by the World Bank in the ease of starting a business and paying taxes. This is, in addition to the complex opaque budgeting cycle these countries operate. Thereby creating haven for corruption as an impediment to the expected growth and development in the region.

Saied decides to work on civic engagement and taxpayer education in Nigeria, by opening the system and educating taxpayers on their rights and obligations. He guides citizens on how their taxes are accrued and expended by the government and how to follow the government and ask questions. He believes that achieving a corrupt-free and transparent system that increases revenue will help reduce poverty in Nigeria. To expand his reach he established a volunteer platform - followtaxes.com for people with like minds to reach a broader target. The platform works to enhance tax knowledge as a weapon against bribery and corruption; train entrepreneurs on basic financial literacy, record keeping, and taxation; provide tax guide to a start-up business that cannot afford a professional and follow the taxes collected and ask questions.

They use the website to reach wider coverage, using English in Nigeria and French in Togo to redefine participatory governance by presenting government data in fetching formats: simple tweets, interactive format, and infographic displays. They have hosted radio programs and market shows in local languages to reach their audience who live in the rural areas that do not have access to the internet. And they use pamphlets, poster designs, and community engagement to engage people around them.

They believe that, for sustainable tomorrow, every citizen has the right to know how his/her taxes are expended in the delivery of public infrastructure and services. It is important also for everybody to pay his/her taxes and engage the government on transparency as a stakeholder. Their website will very soon offer toll-free mobile and online feedback solutions, to trigger discussions around the taxation and budget. With the aim of taking the budget beyond being a news item, to becoming a focal point of debate among Nigerians.

Saied sits on the fiscal transparency and citizen engagement working group to help Nigeria on her journey to implement the Open Government Partnership National Action Plan and he work further to strengthen democratic institutions in Nigeria with yourbudgit.com to OpenKaduna Kaduna State Government Budget in Nigeria. An open budget project that aimed at bringing people closer to the government by improving citizen engagement.

No wonder he was selected to join the Mandela Washington Fellowship of Young African Leaders. A network of young Africans with the skills and motivations to spur growth 2014 by President Obama, and he as singled-out by Secretary of State John Kerry as a youth worth emulating in Norther

Nigeria, when the secretary Visited Nigeria in August of 2016.

Contributed by Saied Tafida. The views and opinions expressed here belong to the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the YALI Network or the U.S. government. Information about the person (max 2 sentences). YALI Voices is a series of podcasts, videos and blogs contributed by members of the YALI Network.

YALI Voices: Tous Pour la Bonne Gouvernance au Tchad

By: Julien Bero

Public sanitation is a guarantee of good governance, a democratic process of a sovereign state that advocates social justice among the people.

The issue of transparency in public affairs remains a major challenge in the Chadian administration. Incivism and slow administrative procedures do not guarantee the principle of good governance.

Absence of democratic culture gives rise to injustice, misappropriation of public funds, impunity and political instability, the consequences of which are often disastrous on the public (poverty, corruption, dissociation, etc.), but also On the authority of the State (the empty state fund, the economic, social and political crisis). The lack of effective governance mechanisms mischaracterizes a system of corruption in all sectors of the state.

In spite of all this, certain categories of Chadians consider that corruption is not a vice but a virtue. Hence, appointments to positions of responsibility fall under the discretion of the hierarchy; Law enforcement officers are corrupt; Teachers give students grades for money. Sometimes some girls drop into the teacher's arms to go to the upper class, a corruption in another form that does not say its name, and whose misdeeds (decline in level, STD, HIV / AIDS ...) make vulnerable the victim. For corruption destroys our moral and educational values at the whole social level of the country.

As civil society actors, we can not remain indifferent to this sinister scourge where most of our fellow citizens are languishing, we want to be resolutely on your side, thanks to the opportunity offered by the program #YALIUnites d ' Undertake fighting actions to contribute to good governance in Chad.

These actions include:

- Organize awareness-raising campaigns in the institutions of the city of Sarh, Middle-Chari region, and then set up relay committees in educational institutions that can follow up with their peers to raise awareness about corruption . It is an upstream work that prepares students' minds to cope with them.
- Organiser des conférences débats, des tables rondes avec les administrateurs, les enseignants, les

étudiants et les autres acteurs de la société civile sur la corruption.

- Mettre en place un mécanisme de sensibilisation médiatique sur la corruption par les radios communautaire (LOTIKO) et locale (ONRTV-Sarh), et les réseaux sociaux. C'est ce que nous entendons mener comme actions de conscientisation en faveur de nos concitoyens pour le changement de mentalité à travers cette proposition.

L'action apportera une solution à cette situation endémique et chronique de la corruption au Tchad. Une prévention contre les différentes formes de délinquance juvénile, de la mauvaise gouvernance au côté de l'Etat et les partenaires de développement du pays.

The project's target groups are pupils, students, public administrators, and local urban and religious authorities in the Middle Chari region.


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YALI Voices: Follow the Money: A Mechanism for Open Government System and Corruption Reduction in Gambia

By: Marr Nyang

When corruption is ignored, perpetrators get richer, leaving hundreds of thousands of people hungry, ill, and insecure. This occurs when national budget and community development funds are allocated for a specific project, but only a portion is used (if ever) and the rest ends up being embezzled by corrupt leaders. How do we make sure project funds are being used as designed? We need to Follow The Money! It doesn't necessarily mean the physical cash, but to make sure allocated funds are being used judiciously, so communities will benefit from the development that these projects were meant for.

According to the [2016 Transparency International Corruption Perception Index](#), Gambia ranks 145 out of 176 countries, with a score of 26 out of 100. In an effort to make changes and cut back on corruption and mismanagement of public funds, we launched [Follow the Money Gambia](#). It uses [Connected Development's \(CODE\) Follow the Model](#) to serve as a watchdog on the government, promote open government, and reduce corruption through the empowerment of communities. When leaders are aware of the existence of organizations such as Follow The Money, they tend to rule with trust and honesty in order not to be named, shamed, or jailed.

Marr Nyang with the children of Basse 

Mansajang (a marginalized community).
Follow The Money making ground
investigation before approaching the
government to make an urgent intervention.

Follow The Money Gambia also works towards community development. When we track funds meant for community development projects and there is no sign of the project being implemented soon, we immediately bring it to the attention of the government for them to take action. If the government shows no positive sign, we make it a headline on social media to hold them accountable. We need to be the voice of our people and that is exactly what Follow The Money Gambia will be doing.

If we ignore how our country is governed and lack interest in national matters, we empower corrupt leaders who are the enemies of national development to thrive.

Follow The Money investigates and educates and most of all, we amplify the voices of the marginalized communities. We unite people, help to development their communities, hold leaders accountable, and promote open governing systems and most importantly, we bring government to the people through town hall meetings with the community and the government agencies that are supposed to implement the project.

Corruption leads to lack of proper justice, lack of development, poor health and hygiene thus we all become vulnerable and scapegoats of the wrongdoings of our leaders. In order for Africa to develop, youth organizations MUST work towards corruption reduction – holding our leaders accountable and promoting transparent administrative system like what Follow The Money Gambia is doing.

We all have to come together, be proactive citizens of The Gambia and leverage on the model of [Follow the Money Nigeria](#) to bring development to the country.

Marr Nyang is founder of [#GambiaParticipates](#), a project aimed at promoting voter education and civic engagement by giving access to relevant election related information.
